

**Tiverton Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2015
Town Hall, 343 Highland Road, Tiverton, RI**

Chairman Ramotowski called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

Members Present: T. Ramotowski (Chair), P. Hilton, L. Cottrell, and R. Guimond.

Members Absent: None.

I. Public Delegations: There were no public delegations.

II. Approval of Minutes: Motion: Ms. Hilton moved to approve the minutes for the October 28, 2014 and January 20, 2015 regular meetings as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Guimond. Vote: Motion passed 4-0.

III. Treasurer's Report: Ms. Cottrell reported that the Commission had \$694.57 remaining in its account for the current fiscal year. Chairman Ramotowski stated that he might want to ask for \$100 from the budget in the near future for the purchase of plants to be used to help stabilize the new sand dunes at Fogland Beach. Plants suitable for such uses cost about \$1.00 each and need to be planted about one foot apart from each other. Volunteers would be recruited for the actual planting. The Commission was amendable to this request.

IV. Brief Announcements: Chairman Ramotowski noted that the workshop with the Town Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Review and the Conservation Commission had been cancelled by the Town Council. A new date for the workshop has not yet been determined. Chairman Ramotowski noted that the workshop on Open Meetings Law responsibilities had been rescheduled to Monday, March 2, 2015.

V. New Business:

Election of Officers

Mr. Guimond nominated Ms. Hilton to serve as Chair for the Commission, and Dr. Ramotowski to serve as Vice-Chair of the Commission. Seconded by Ms. Cottrell. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Chairwoman Hilton nominated Ms. Cottrell to serve as the Commission's Treasurer. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Guimond. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Ms. Cottrell volunteered to serve as Commission Secretary and to take the minutes for the regular meetings until more Commission members were appointed.

Discussion of Sign Ordinance

Chairwoman Hilton provided each Commission member with a handout the indicated the changes she wanted to make to the sign ordinance. As it is currently written the ordinance does not allow existing, interior-illuminated signs to be altered or changed because they are considered to be non-conforming. The proposed changes would allow existing interior-illuminated signs to be altered/upgraded without a net increase in their size.

Dr. Ramotowski moved that the proposed changes to the sign ordinance be forwarded to the Town Council for its consideration. The motion was seconded by Mr. Guimond.
Vote: Motion passed 4-0.

Goals for 2015

It was the consensus of the Commission that this item should be deferred until more members were appointed to the Commission.

VI. Old Business:

Review of “Watershed Protection Overlay District” Language/Tiverton Planning Board:

Dr. Ramotowski noted that on February 6, 2015, he had sent a letter to the Town Administrator reminding him of the need to maintain strong protective language in the overlay districts as the Town Council considers changing the zoning of various areas throughout Town from their previous designations to commercial.

Town Zoning Ordinance for Earth Removal/Quarrying:

Dr. Ramotowski noted that the Commission still had not received any response from the Town Administrator to its letter requesting information related to the findings of the consultant hired by the Town to assess the possible impacts of the quarrying operations on surface and ground water quality in the Town. It is unclear why there has been no response to the letter or what the Commission could do to force a response from the Town Administrator.

Tiverton Crossings Development

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Dr. Ramotowski noted that he had hand-delivered a letter, dated 22 February 2015, conveying the Commission’s opposition to the Tiverton Crossings/Glen development proposal. K. Michaud of the Planning Department said that she would provide copies of the letter to all of the Planning Board members, and she would also have the letter read into the record of the public hearing on this topic.

Zoning Board of Review Hearing/Tiverton 4-Corners Properties:

Chairwoman Hilton Reported that the applicant had reapplied and the new application would be on the Zoning Board of Review's agenda for next month. There are still legal and environmental issues with this application and it is unclear how they can be reconciled. It was also unclear how the existing approval could or would be revoked by the ZBR. It is important that an environmental impact statement be generated for this application.

VII. Standing Committee Reports:

Town Comprehensive Plan Review Committee:

There was nothing new to report.

Litter Prevention Initiatives:

The Litter Control Committee sent out a new newsletter to the "Adopt-an-Area-in-Tiverton participants.

With the resignation of Ms. Cote, this standing committee needs a new lead from the appointed members of the Commission.

Stafford Pond Issues Update:

There was nothing new to report.

Fogland Beach Issues Update:

There was nothing new to report.

Landfill Issues:

Mr. Guimond reported that Pare Engineering estimated the landfill will be closed in about two years based upon the RI-DEM permitted height and the amount of trash being buried. The Landfill subcommittee is still considering different sites around Town for the recycling center after the landfill is closed.

It was suggested that the Landfill Committee generate a new list of what can and cannot be included in the recycling bins. There appears to be some confusion in this regard among Town residents, and if the wrong items are included, the Central Recycling facility in Johnston can refuse to accept a load of recyclables from the Town. Mr. Guimond stated that he would bring this suggestion to the Landfill Committee at its next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM

Submitted by:

Dr. T. S. Ramotowski